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All Clear!"

By
JOHN OXENHAM

Author of
"Bees in Amber," "All's Well!" etc., etc.



All Clear!

All Clear!

*The Cumbered ways are free
For man to build, as God hath willed,
His glorious liberty.*

"ALL CLEAR!" A BOOK OF
VERSE COMMEMORATIVE
OF THE GREAT PEACE
BY JOHN OXENHAM
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TO
ALL HIGH SOULS
WHO
SEEKING NOT THEIR OWN GOOD
BUT THE GLORY OF GOD
AND THE
GOOD OF THEIR FELLOWS ARE
STRIVING TO BUILD THE NEW LIFE
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS INSCRIBED
IN THE GREAT HOPE THAT
OUT OF PRESENT LOSS SHALL COME
A GREATER GAIN.

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Foreword

Four years of the most hideous warfare the world has ever known—or, we may now hope, is ever like to know—have razed the old House of Life to the ground. The world is still sore cumbered with the ruins, but slowly and surely they are being cleared away and cast on the scrap-heap.

Crowns and Kingdoms have fallen to the dust. Those who took the sword, and forced a reluctant world in self-defence to do the same, have fallen by the sword, and for the most part they are powerless for further active ill. For which we are devoutly thankful.

But—after the clearance must come the rebuilding, and unless that is done on righteous lines all this horror will have been futile—the losses we have suffered, both by war and pestilence, will be as nothing compared with the thrown-away future,—the loss of That Which Might and Ought To Be.

The old order can never be renewed. We are grateful, for it was full of evil.

The New Temple of Life must be built on surer foundations and in all ways builded better.

The only foundation is Christ. The only builder is God, through His servants. Anything less is world-loss that may never be retrieved.

Man's refusal of God's Proffered Way, 1900 years ago, was the sorest rebuff He ever received, and the greatest blow. Yet His great offer has never been withdrawn. It still holds good.

Until the world turns from its own ways to His, and from the depths of its soul desires Christ back into its Life, all its strivings are in vain—blind and futile beatings of the wind and ploughings of the sand.

That is the simple fundamental fact which there is no gainsaying and no shirking.

We are face to face with it, and it means world-life or world-death.

What are you doing about it?

JOHN OXENHAM.

All clear!

All clear!

*The cumbered ways are free
For man to build, as God hath willed,
His glorious liberty.
If but man will
Turn from his ill,
And own His sovereignty,
His loftiest hopes he shall fulfil;
God's proffered grace is proffered still,—
If—but—man—will!*

“All Clear!”

I.

I HEARD a knocking on The Outer Door
That stands betwixt man and the Infinite ;
And every knock re-echoed in my heart,
And in the troubled heart-beats of the
world.

The Door stood fast, with complex bolts
and bars
That could be opened only from within,
And He who knocked stood patiently
without,
And knocked and knocked and
waited But
The bolts were rusted stiff with many a
sin,
And no man rose to loosen them
And let Him in.

Within were noises multitudinous,
Confusions vast and endless, hopeless
strife ;
Earth's millions, swarming like an angry
hive,
Fought for their lives but gave no
thought to Life.

How should that knocking on the Outer
 Door
 Be heard amid such murderous uproar?

Small thought indeed they gave, and
 still less heed
 To Him who stood so patiently without
 And knocked upon The Door, and on
 their hearts,
 Bolted as surely lest He should come in.

And if one, here and there, with quick-
 ened sense,—
 On bed of pain or overwhelmed with woe,
 When the night-watches dragged so
 leaden slow,—
 Did hear, in his own heart-beats, echo low
 Of that persistent knocking on The Door,
 He would turn, restless, on his tumbled
 bed,
 And cry perchance,—“Yes, yes!—I
 hear!—I know!
 And presently I’ll let Thee in. . . . but
 now. . . .”
 Then, conscience-pricked and soothed,
 would fall asleep
 Or to his woes again.

And He without;—
 His feet were bleeding from the road
 That He so hopefully had trod
 To lead men back to God.

His brow still bore the scurril thorn,
—The noblest crown was ever worn—
His fair white robe was stained and torn;
But yet no suppliant forlorn
Was He
Who waited there so patiently.

His face was sad yet full of loving hope—
—The saddest face the world has ever
seen.

Yet Love,
That conquered Death, still hopeful strove
With that sore challenge of the close-
barred Door,
Nor would surrender smallest shred of
hope,
But hoping, lived and loved and hoped
the more.
For Love lives on though Hope may
droop and die,
Since Christ Himself gave Love her
amaranth crown
Of Immortality.

The gentle hands that ever wrought
men's good
Still bore the wounds of man's ingrati-
tude,
And as He waited there, so great the
pain
Of that barred Door, the old wounds
bled again.

Yet was His mien right royal, and His
 eyes
 Shone as the stars shine in the unfath-
 omed skies
 Of God's vast distances. They pierced
 The Door,
 Saw all that passed within—and more;
 Saw whither all this maddened coil was
 tending,—
 Saw the beginning—and saw too the
 ending,—
 Saw to the full the dread catastrophe
 That waited man, if, contumacious, he
 Persisted still in his gross perfidy.

*And . . . ever . . . ever,
 More and more
 Impassioned, yet all patiently,
 The Silent Watcher stood without
 And knocked upon the close-barred
 Door,
 Stood ever waiting . . . waiting . . .
 waiting,
 Ever knocking on The Door,
 And no man let Him in.*

*Has Life e'er known a sweeter, truer,
 Nobler, more devoted wooer,
 Or Love more loving a pursuer?
 Yet man would none of Him!*

II.

EARTH was a pit of endless miseries—
Man strove with man, nation with nation
 strove,
For little masteries of this and that,
Which passed like bubbles on a moun-
 tain stream,
And vanished like the fragments of a
 dream.

Behind the Silent Watcher at The Door
Lay all the vast ungauged infinities
Of time and space—God's great eterni-
 ties.

And there within, man plied his little
 will,—
God's greatest gift—the freedom to fulfil
His destiny, to choose 'twixt good and
 ill,—
That made him lord and master of his
 fate,
Free of the high and low, the small, the
 great.

And all too oft that small self seeking will
Turned the fair earth to hells of misery,
Nor gave a thought to all that lay beyond,
In the unfathomed vast of God's eternity.

But here and there, at times, some loftier
 soul
 Unduly born into a heedless world,
 And with earth's self-made sorrows
 weighted sore,
 Would hear the knocking on The Outer
 Door,
 And cry his soul aloud,—“O deaf and
 blind!
 Can ye not hear the knocking on the
 Door?
 Christ stands without and knocks. Give
 heed! Give heed!
 For your souls' sakes, give heed! Un-
 bar The Door,
 Lest, weary grown, He pass upon His
 way
 And leave you to yourselves for ever-
 more!”

But they, intent on their own ends,
 would cry,—
 “Nay, keep it barred! There is not
 room on earth
 For Him and us. Our ways are not as
 His;
 We cannot live within His liberties.”

And some,—“Not yet! Not yet! First
 let us work
 Our own salvation out, and fit the world

For His indwelling. Then will we give
Him
Welcome full. But now . . .
How could He dwell in such a world as
this?
Wait till we lessen its disparities!"

And everywhere was strife. The Church
of Christ,
Itself divided, strove within itself
For things that control not, and gave
small heed
To Life's deep open wounds and poignant
needs,
And with its Christless futile wrang-
lings drowned
The sound of that low knocking on The
Door.

And so the seething millions heeded not
Its teachings so diverse, its clashing
creeds,
But sought in other ways to salve their
woes,
By baser means to satisfy their needs.
And Christ was left bereft of those
Whose sacred duty called them to oppose
Life's growing evils and The Kingdom's
foes.

*And . . . ever . . . ever
More and more*

*Impassioned, yet all patiently,
The Silent Watcher stood without
And knocked upon the close-barred
Door,
Stood ever waiting . . . waiting . . .
waiting,
Ever knocking on the Door,
And no man let Him in.*

*Has Life e'er known a sweeter, truer,
Nobler, more devoted wooer,
Or Love more loving a pursuer?
Yet man would none of Him!*

III.

EARTH'S ills waxed more and more; and
still The Door,
By which God's Mercy entrance sought,
was barred.

In the demonic storm and stress of life
The soft persistent knocking was not
heard.

None rose to let The Consolator in,
None thought of Him, none cared.

Earth was convulsed with wars. The
Kingdoms raged,
Without, within, and strife was every-
where.

At times the turmoil broke with thun-
drous roar,

Like a great blast from hell, upon The
Door,
And shook it and the very walls of
heaven.

And He without stood patiently and
knocked,

And knocked . . . and knocked . . .
But no man heard, and no man cared,
And no man rose to let Him in.

The world in torment groaned unceas-
ingly,—

One long unending cry of tortured
souls,—

The panting sobs of men who fought
for life,
Women in anguish, children's wailing
cries,
Laughter of fools, and moans of dying
men,
All blent in one hoarse dirge of agony.

For, even where no actual strife was
waged,
Where, here and there, the lands at
times had peace,—
Peace that but hatched the broods of
further wars,—
Yet even there black hidden warfare
raged,
Of fouler cast than where the hosts en-
gaged.

—Warfare of commerce girding men to
nought,
Bodies and souls but chattels to be bought
And sold for profit—devil's marketing!—
Traffic of ghouls with endless evils
fraught;

—Warfare of vast self-seeking enterprise,
Which grew distent on other's miseries,
Soul-less and thoughtless save for its
own gain,
Its ledgers foul with many a grim red
stain;

—Warfare of greed that stole the
children's lives;

Warfare of lust that naught could satisfy,
Honour as dust, and women left to die;

—Warfare of class with class, and
rancorous hate

That would all save itself annihilate.

In all the cities, underneath the fair
Outside presentment, lurked vast char-
nel-caves

Of poverty and evil and despair,—

Black jungles where the wild beasts
made their lair,

And lay in wait, and prowled by night
Their victims to ensnare.

Even the countrysides bred evil things,—
Dank miseries, oppressions, burdenings,
Old as the hills,—the strong enbondaging
The weak in helpless vassalage.

Warfare of Evil everywhere with that
Primordial Good, with which in plenti-
tude

God in creation His fair earth endued;

But now, in place of His beatitude,—

Eternal strife and fratricidal feud,

Everywhere Evil fighting against Good.

And, 'mid the storm-clouds of the upper
air,

Great shadowy armies fought a ghostly
 fight,
 With crashing thunders, lightnings blast-
 ing bright,
 That whelmed the earth with their stu-
 pendous might,
 And left it quivering with despair,
 And sore affright.

Earth was no longer earth as God
 designed;
 Perverse and blind, the free-will of man-
 kind
 Had made it liker hell. And Faith and
 Hope
 Their draggled wings had spread,
 And, sorrowing, fled,
 Since Love, that should have ruled the
 world,
 Was dead.

*And . . . ever . . . ever
 More and more
 Impassioned, yet all patiently,
 The Silent Watcher stood without
 And knocked upon the close-barred
 Door,
 Stood ever waiting . . . waiting . . .
 waiting,
 Ever knocking on the Door,
 And no man let Him in.*

*Has Life e'er known a sweeter, truer,
 Nobler, more devoted wooer,
 Or Love more loving a pursuer?
 Yet man would none of Him!*

IV.

THEN rose a man,
 God-reared, and God-inspired,—a simple
 man,
 Of lowly birth but full of holy fire,
 And cried, as cried the Messengers of old,
 And earth in her extremity gave heed;—

*"Thus saith the Lord,—
 'I have desired you with a great desire,
 Yea, with desire that nought else could
 satisfy,
 With the rue of a mother bereft of her
 first-born,
 With the ache of a father whose sons
 have gone from him,
 My heart has gone out to you,
 Reached for you, craved for you, . . .
 . . . And ye would not.*

*Come back to Me now, O My children,
 My children!
 For you have wandered and far I have
 followed you;
 Come to Me now, O My children, My
 children,
 And you shall find rest for your souls!'"*
 And from the earth went up a weary sigh,

"Yea, come! Lord, come! We die in
misery!"

"I have called to you, called to you,
called without ceasing;

On the doors of your hearts I have
knocked without ceasing;

I have waited, and waited, with patience
unfailing;

I have called, and have called, and have
never ceased calling;—

And ye would not!

Come back to Me now, O My sons and My
daughters!

Come to Me now with your burdens of
sorrow!

Come!—You are weary and heavily laden,
And you shall find rest for your souls! "

And from the earth went up a longing
sigh;—

"Yea, come! Lord, come! Come quickly
lest we die!"

"How shall I come when the doors you
have bolted?

The doors of your hearts you have bolted
against Me.

How can I come when the bolts are
against Me?

The bolts are on your side the door, not
on My side.' "

Then heard they Him,—and heeded, for
 their woes
 Had grown beyond their bearing, and
 their needs
 Passed their desires.
 Storms they had sown, and whirlwinds
 they had reaped,
 Sands they had ploughed, and garnered
 only dust;
 Their mouths were full of ashes—Dead-
 Sea fruit
 That turned within to gall and bitterness.
 Their buidling left a world with wreck-
 age fraught,
 Their vast self-strivings all had come
 to nought,
 Their own devices their own ruin
 wrought.

*"Unbar the Door!"—they cried,—"Un-
 bar the Door,
 And let the Lord Christ in!
 All other ways have proved our own
 ways vain,
 His power alone can cleanse the world
 of sin,
 His love alone can give us peace again.
 Unbar the Door, and let the Lord Christ
 in!"*

*And ever . . . ever . . .
 More and more*

*Impassioned, yet all patiently,
The eager Watcher stood without
And knocked upon the close-barred
Door,
Stood ever waiting, . . . waiting . . .
waiting,
Ever knocking on the Door,
But now man hearkened Him.*

*Life never knew a sweeter, truer,
Nobler, more devoted wooer,
Nor Love more loving a pursuer,
And now man craved for Him.*

V.

THEN rose that man of God, and cried,—
*"Repent ye of your sins! Repent! Repent!
 I will unbar the door and let Him in,
 His love alone can cleanse the world of
 sin."*

But some there were still obdurate, who
 strove
 To stay His purposing, and when,
 Aflame with zeal, he pressed toward The
 Door,
 Aflame with rage, they thrust upon him
 sore.

He reached The Door;—with his last
 breath he drew
 The rusted bolts, then fell beneath their
 blows;
 And, as The Door swung wide, the
 heavenly light
 Fell first on him who died to let it in.

He lay there dead, below The Opened
 Door;
 But on his eager happy face was look
 Of high content that he—unworthy he—
 Had been found worthy to be spent
 On such supreme accomplishment.

And those who slew him, full of bitter-
ness,

Strove hard to close again the Opening
Door;

But others, all ablaze with that same fire
Which first flamed up within the man
of God,

Rose quick to follow in the steps he
trod,

Eager to give themselves, their lives,
their all,

To satisfy Life's soul-compelling call.

So there was strife again, but this time
strife

'Twi'x Good and Ill—yea, for Life's very
life,—

Strife to the death 'twixt that new sense
of Right

And the old evil power of Godless Might.

The strife waxed sore, and sorer thar
before,

And Christ stood watching through the
Opened Door,—

Watching and praying

And His prayers availed.

Great hosts of angels hovered o'er the
fight

And heartened those who fought that
fight for Right,

That they prevailed..

Long, long and bitter was that final strife,
Till Life was smitten to the verge of
death.

But, by God's mercy, Life won through
at last,

The hosts of Ill were smitten hip and
thigh,

And Earth thanked God for its delivery.

And so at last the long-closed Door
stood wide,

And none gainsayed it now, and none
denied

Christ's right of entrance with the
Sweeter Life

Which meant an end for ever to all strife.

VI.

THE Door swung wide, and wider, wider
 grew,
 Till like the dawn it spread across the
 sky;
 Great seas of new life-giving light
 welled through,
 And spread o'er all the earth a quick-
 ening flood,—
 Healing and life for all earth's deadly
 woes,
 That larger Life that Love alone
 bestows—
 Life out of death for all the sons of men,
 For in the Light Christ came to earth
 again.
 His white-robed heralds of the New-
 Born Day
 Like silver clarions sounded far and near
 The thrilling joyaunce of His great "All
 clear!"
 And, as on that first morn, they chanted
 —"Peace!
*Peace upon earth!—to men of good-will,
 Peace!"*
 For in that word was pledge of man's
 release,—
*"Peace upon earth!—to men of good-will
 Peace!"*
 Into each darkest corner of the earth

Streamed those great beams of sweet
light-giving light,
Shrivelling all foulness that it sank and
died,
And went back to its native elements
To be re-made for good. And so, at last,
Earth was all clean for Him to build upon.

Then rang the heavens, and earth re-
sponsive rang,
With the glad songs the joyous heralds
sang,—

Glory to God!
Glory to God!
Glory to God in the highest!
And on earth—Peace!
Peace upon earth!
Peace upon earth!
To men of good-will—Peace!
Peace upon earth!
To Life—new birth!
To all men—Peace!
To all—release!

*Gone all the bonds that burdened
Life before!*
*Christ has passed through the newly-
opened Door!*

*We thank Thee, Lord, that of Thy
boundless grace,
Mankind has turned at last to seek Thy
face,*

Turned from himself, and of his own
free-will

Seeks now Thy loving, purpose to fulfil.
For this Thy boundless grace we thank
Thee, Lord!

We thank Thee, thank Thee,
Thank Thee, Lord!

We thank Thee, Lord, that of Thy
boundless love

Mankind Thy boundless tenderness may
prove,

May share with us the joyousness above,
Where love is life, and life eternal love.

For this Thy boundless love we thank
Thee, Lord!

We thank Thee, thank Thee,
Thank Thee, Lord!

We thank Thee, Lord, for this Thy gift
of Peace.

Let all the world build now to Thine
increase,

Build as mankind has never built before,
And in Thy service grow from more to
more.

For this Thy Gift of Peace we thank
Thee, Lord!

We thank Thee, thank Thee,
Thank Thee, Lord!"

And others jubilantly sang,
While heaven and earth responsive
rang;—

*"Hear the glad tidings, all ye sons
of men,—*

*Christ to His own with joy is come
again!*

*Hear the glad tidings of the Prince
of Peace!*

*Hear the glad tidings of the world's
release!*

*Hear the glad tidings of the New-
Born Peace!*

Peace upon earth!

To men of good-will—Peace!

*Tell it, ye heavens of heavens, ye
worlds on high,—*

*'The Lord has come all life to
glorify.'*

*Earth's myriad voices thunder in
reply,*

*'The Lord has come. We laud and
magnify.'*

*Hear the glad tidings in all lands,
all men,—*

*'The Prince of Peace is come to
earth again!'*

*Hear the glad news, let all your
strivings cease,—*

*'Peace upon earth,—to men of good-
will, Peace!'*

*Tell it, ye mountains, towering to
the skies,*

Peak tell to peak your joyous ecstasies,—

*'The Prince of Peace in triumph
comes again,
To dwell for ever with the sons of
men.'*

*Tell it, ye winds; on your great
pinions bear*

*The wondrous tidings through the
waiting air,—*

*'Christ to His own with joy is come
again,
To found His Kingdom in the hearts
of men.'*

*Tell it, ye worlds that swing in outer
space,*

*Sun, moon, and stars, each in his
proper place;*

*Tell it, ye rivers rushing to the seas;
Tell it, ye seas, through all your
liberties;*

*Tell it, and tell, and tell it yet
again,—*

*'The Christ of God lives with the
sons of men.'*"

And this son too the heralds sang,
While many a heart responsive rang;—

*"How many, Lord, have died
To clear the cumbered ways,
To set the Closed Door wide,*

*To free the future days,
To set the Closed Door wide,
To give Thee entrance free,
Right willingly they died,
Right glad they live with Thee.*

*Right willingly they died,
Right joyfully they live,
For ever by Thy side,
Since Thou dost honour give*

*To all who died for Thee,
To clear the cumbered ways,
To give Thee entrance free,
To build the future days.*

*Praise be to God for all
The lives so greatly given!
No soul of all who met the Call
But lives with Thee in heaven."*

And all in mighty chorus sang,
While heaven and earth responsive
rang,—

*All Clear! All Clear!
The evil days are gone,
The Prince of Peace is here
To claim His Throne.*

*All Clear! All Clear!
The evil days are gone.*

*His Throne is in
The hearts of all who will
Cast out their dearest sin
And Love fulfil.*

All Clear! All Clear!
The cumbered ways are free
For man to build, as God hath
willed,

His sovereignty.

All Clear! All Clear!

Lord, build Thy sovereignty.

His sovereignty
Knows naught of time or space,
It spreads through all infinity
As does His grace.

All Clear! All Clear!
Build now His Temple fair,
With Love alone as corner-stone,
And faithful care!

All Clear! All Clear!

Build now His Temple fair!

His Temple fair
Is in the sons of men,
And that ye are;
The Christ is come again.

All Clear! All Clear! All Clear!
The Christ is come again,
To build with care His Temple fair
Among the sons of men.

All Clear! All Clear! All Clear!

We thank Thee, O our God,
For this Thy Gift of Peace!
Our hearts we raise in fervid praise
Praise that shall never cease.

VII.

So Christ came back again,
But not as suppliant now;
With power He came, His own to claim
His gracious promise to maintain,
As King Omnipotent to reign
Within the hearts of men;—
As Lord Supreme of Death and Life,
As peaceful victor in the strife,
He came.

He came, amid the world's acclaim,
To found His kingdom upon earth,
To give to Life a nobler birth,
And heal it of its shame.

No gladder face was ever seen than His,
So full of grace and all high sovereignties,
And all aglow with sweet benignities.

His love-lit eyes shone like the great
twin stars,
And on His brow which once had worn,
With patient dignity, the thorn,
Was now a radiant crown of stars,
Which hid and healed the bitter scars
Made by the crown of scorn.

His robe was brighter than the noon-
day sun,
And in His hand He bore a holy grail,
Clear crystal, brimmed with blessings
infinite,—

Pardon and grace for all who would,
And benedictions sweet. . . .

And as He came, His eager foot fell
first

Upon the body of His harbinger,
Low-fallen there below The Opened
Door.

He looked upon the high, enraptured face,
So full content at being so well spent,
Then stooped, and raised Him with His
strong, right hand,

And kissed Him on the brow, and drew
him close,

His first sweet deodand.

*"Well done, Well done! My good and
faithful one!*

*You gave your life to see the work begun,
Come now with Me and see it fully
done!"*

And, side by side, their faces all alight,
Their eyes clear-shining like the stars
of night,

Hand clasping hand, they passed along
the light.

And, as they went,

The Master said,

In tones so penetrant and clear

That every soul on earth could hear;—

"Come unto Me, all you heavily burdened ones!

*Come unto Me, all you weary ones, come!
The home is all waiting that I have prepared for you,*

All through the years while I waited and cared for you,

And now I am waiting to welcome you home.

Come to Me! Come to Me! Come to Me! Come!

And you shall find rest for your souls!

Have I not borne greater burdens of sorrow?

Have I not known what it was to be lonely?

Lean on Me now for to-day and to-morrow,

Trust in Me wholly, and trust in Me only!—

And you shall find rest for your souls!

Here for your sorrow is healing and gladness,

Give me your burden, and take you another's,

So shall you rid you of all your own sadness,

Healing your own wound by healing your brother's,

And you shall find rest for your souls!"

VIII.

THEN was the earth made anew where'er
He went,
For all men's hearts were opened to the
Light,
And Christ was King, and Lord Om-
nipotent.

Before Him swept that flood of radiant
light,
Of rarest hues all blent to purest white,
Probing each hole and corner where the
dark
Still clung,—routing the miasms as the
sun
Dispels the morning mists, and cleansing
earth
Of her impurities.

And everywhere men's hearts turned
unto Him
As to the very source and fount of
Right,
As flowers turn to the sun, and every-
where
New Life sprang up to greet Him as
He went
Dispensing grace to all men everywhere.
And His dispenséd grace changed all
men's hearts,

Made His will theirs, and their wills
wholly His;
So that they strove no more each for
himself,
But each for good of all, and all for Him.
Man's common aim was for the com-
mon good;
The age-old feuds were of the past,
And all mankind joined hands at last
In common brotherhood.

The city jungles withered in the Light,
And in their places rose fit homes for men,
Where children no more died like
autumn flies,
And there was room for all, and spa-
cious life.

The smiling country-side no longer
served
The favoured few, but bore their treas-
ure-stores
For all who chose, and golden harvest
gave
Of health, and wealth, and happiness
for all,
And all good cheer.

The old waste places blossomed as the
rose,
And earth bore plenteously for all men's
needs;

Life's crooked things were all at last
 made straight,
 And the rough places plain.
 For Christ, the Lord, the Advocate
 With God for man degenerate,
 Had stripped Him of His high estate,
 And, filled with love impassionate,
 In mercy great had come again
 To dwell among the sons of men.

And every man in all the whole wide
 world
 Had room, and time, and wherewithal
 to live
 His life at fullest full within the Law—
 The Law that has no bounds or bonds
 for those
 Who live it, for it is His Love,—
 The great unchanged, unchanging, and
 unchangeable
 Law, whose beginning and whose end is
 —Love.

*As it was in the beginning,
 Is now, and ever shall be,
 World without end.—Amen!*

*Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui
 Sancto,
 Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et
 semper,
 Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen!*

A Little Book of Common Praise

I.

WITH hearts responsive and enfranchised
eyes,
We thank Thee Lord, for all Thy ministries;
Our ceaseless thanks Thy ceaseless gifts
acclaim,
Yet ceaseless praise is nobler incense flame.

So, unto Thee let every earthly thing
Perpetual, pure, impassioned praises sing!
To Thee eternal praise be given
By every creature Thou hast made
In earth and heaven!—
And by mankind, Creation's last and best,
Whose praise is still not equal to the rest.
For man accepts, as of his right, the things
Which Nature all spontaneous lauds and
sings.
And though he render thanks,
Yet—Praise
To Thee
Is still the nobler ecstasy.

Praise be to God
For all His wondrous ways,
For all the splendour of His hidden ways,
For all the tender thoughtfulness, and grace,

Which suffers our vast waywardness
And yet prolongs our days!

To Him for all things—Praise!
To Him from all things—Praise!
To Him in all things—Praise!

II.

In all the nights be praise!

In all the days!

In sun and moon and stars be praise!

In all the vast infinitudes of heaven,—

In all the earth to its remotest end,—

In worlds beyond as yet by man unkennd,—

Praise in the morning stars

Which sing together still, as on that dawn

When first the curtains of the night were
drawn!

Praise in the sun, the fair life-giving sun,
Rejoicing his triumphant course to run!

Praise in the moon's white rapture of delight,
Vesting the darkness with a mystic rite!

In all Thy countless firmaments be praise!—

In all Thy vast infinitudes of space;—

In all Thy gleaming jewels of the night,

Spread like a royal casket to our sight;—

In every world that Thou hast made, be
Praise!—

Still sweeter Praise!

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

In all the days be praise!—

In those sweet vital days of quickening life.

Which cheer hearts weary with the winter's
strife;—

In those wide days of Nature's graciousness,
Which brim our hearts with joyous thank-
fulness;—

In those soft days declining to the fall,
When careful Nature plays the prodigal;—
Yea, and in wintry days that give zest
To homely joys, while Nature takes her
rest;—

In days of sun, when Nature's heart is
glad;—

In days of gloom, when Nature's face is
sad;—

Each its own part in Thy intention plays,
Each unto Thee doth render joyful praise,—

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

In nights no death-blast smites,—in peaceful
days,

Be Praise!

And in that Greater Peace which shall bind
all

The peoples in a Peace Perpetual,

*Still greater Praise!—
Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

In aught that Life has learned from Death
 through strife;
 In the new cravings for the Larger Life;
 In quickened hearts; in wider-visioned
 thought;
 In all Life's gains, so sadly, dearly bought,
Be Praise!

And in Thy many mercies in the days
 We now look back on with such dire amaze,
 When, but for Thy support most evident,
 We had been broken in the grim red ways,
 And to no purpose spent;
 In Thy deliverances in those dread days,—
Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!

* * * * *

The Great Procession of the Days
Seeps on and on;
By upward ways, by downward ways,
By ways that fill us with amaze,
But ever on.
They bring us good; they bring us ill;
We know not what; they are Thy will,
As they sweep on.

But this we know, the day will come
When we shall meet Thy "Welcome
Home!"

*Then, on and on,
The long day of eternity
Will bring us ever nearer Thee,
So we press on.*

*We thank Thee for the changing days,
Each bringing something new;
For Life would prove a weary round
If on its face no change were found,
If it no variant knew.*

*The very sun would be a blight
If he perpetual shone;
And so we thank Thee for the night,
That brings to life a brief respite
And strength for the unknown.*

*The days and nights Thy good gifts are,
Help us to make of them, Dear Lord,
A holy calendar!*

III.

*In all Thy Heavens of Heavens be Praise!
And as in Heaven, so on earth be Praise!*

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

In all the high angelic hosts be Praise,—
Thy holy ones, begotten, not create,
Untouched of earth, all pure, immaculate,
Who served Thee then when on the waters'
face

Thy Spirit brooded, ere Thy love did chase
The Shadows of the black preordial night,
And with a word called out of darkness
Light.

These render praise beyond all earthly
powers,

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

In all Thy chosen from the sons of men,
Who bore without a stain their mortal
chain,—

Thy Saints on whose pure souls earth beat
in vain,

High Praise!

Yet sweeter unto Thee the praise of those
 Thy Love redeemed from earth's abysmal
 woes,
 Who in their depths have drunk the reeper
 cup,
 And by Thy Love have been more lifted up.
 Through clouds and darkness they discerned
 Thy face,
 Theirs the full measure of redeeming grace.
 These have known death that they the more
 might live,
 And they who most receive, the most shall
 give.
 So, from the souls from sin redeemed, shall
 rise,
 Beyond all others sweets of sacrifice,
 Incense of Praise Thou most of all wilt
 prize.

*So, in Thy Havens of Heavens—eternal
 Praise!*

*Yet in the souls from sin redeemed,
 Still sweeter Praise!
 Praise without ceasing!
 Without ending—Praise!*

* * * * *

De Profundis

*Out of the depths
To Thee, O Lord, I cried,
And Thou my pressing need
Hast ne'er denied.*

*Thy hand reached down,
The strong right hand of Love,
And lifted me right up
My cares above.*

*Had I not been
Sunk in the depths of woe,
I ne'er had known how much
To Thee I owe.*

*And so, although
The depths were very sore,
Through them I know Thee more
Than e'er before.*

*Out of the depths
My soul can rise to God,
Since He who died for me
This same way trod.*

*So, for the depths
I still will grateful be,
Since they made known to me
Thy Charity.*

IV.

In all Thy Temples—Praise!

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

—In these the living temples of Thy grace,
Wherein we dwell for such a little space,
Yet each is planned with all-unequaled skill
Its well-appointed duties to fulfil.
And, though the lease be short, yet each
 one is
A marvel of divinest mysteries.

Praise in each heart-beat, every pulse and
 breath
That speeds our journeying 'twixt birth and
 death!—
From its first launching to its final port,
However long, the voyage is but short.

In that within us which derives from Thee,
And through all earth's distractions bids us
 grope
Upwards and onwards towards the mighty
 hope

Of Immortality, be Praise!

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

Praise in their proper functioning of all
These wondrous powers that answer to my
call!

—In mind alert, and opened eye and ear
That love to seek and find Thee everywhere!
Praise in the marvels of this mortal frame,
Which Thy supreme and loving skill pro-
claim!

—In healty mind in healthy body shrined,
Each serving each, as wisdom first designed!

Praise in the balanced working of the
brain,—

The Master—failing whom all else is vain!
Praise, Lord,—and of Thy grace and mercy
deign

The Master in His empire to maintain!

Praise in the joyous sense of sight and
sound,

With their vast widening of perception's
bound!

And praise in added senses given when these
Grow fainter with life's long activities!

In touch, and taste, and smell, that serve so
well

The dweller in this narrow citadel,

Be Praise!

Praise in sleep's sweet renewal of life's
waste!

Praise in the waking to life's conflict braced!

In that new eagerness for ampler life,
For which men fought so long and valiantly;
In all the soul's unpreaching after Thee;
In Life's instinctive struggle to be free
From all the prisonings that bowed and bent
And barred it of its full accomplishment

Be Praise!

Praise in man's strength, in woman's beauty—
Praise!

—In every child's unspoiled, spontaneous
grace!

—In Love's sweet tendrils graciously en-
twined

With love responsive, heart and soul and
mind!

Let every meanest member of my frame
Sing endless praises to its Maker's name!

Yet none is mean that bears the Master's
seal,

Since all alike His perfect skill reveal.

*In all the living Temples of Thy grace
 Be Praise!
 Praise without ceasing!
 Without ending—Praise!*

* * * * *

*What is man that Thou should'st mind
 him?*

*—The son of man that Thou should'st
 visit him?*

*In Thine own likeness, Lord,
 Thy tender love designed him,
 And was it not Thy word
 That wrought the wonders of his frame,
 And breathed in him the living flame
 Of Thine own spirit?*

*—Didst bid him stand and walk upright,
 Head to the heavens as in Thy sight;*

*—And of Thy magnanimity
 Didst Thine omnipotence curtail
 To crown him with free-will,—
 The power to choose the great or small,
 The high or low, the good or ill.*

*And sadly, sadly has he used
 That gift, and Thy great trust abused.
 No more he follows Thy behest,
 Nor sets Thee first, nor gives Thee best;
 But goes his own way down the steep,
 His self-sown harvesting to reap.*

*And yet, without free-will, he were
But slave, and no more son and heir.
And so we thank Thee for Thy grace,
And pray Thee bear with us a space!*

V.

In Service—Praise!

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

In every noble self-denying deed,
Which none but Thou perchance dost see or
heed,

High Praise indeed!

In all who came back from the gates of
death,—

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

For all who came back from the gates of
death—

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

For all ho, nobly striving, nobly fell,—

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

For all who, nobly strving, nobly fell,—

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

Praise in the souls of heroes, ranging free
 The glorious High Ways of Eternity!
 Praise in the valiance which their souls sus-
 tained!

Praise in the well-won rest they have at-
 tained!

Praise in the goodly work and steadfast
 heart

Of those at home who bore an equal part!
 Praise in the widening spirit of the days,
 Which everywhere new-quickenng life dis-
 plays!

In all who serve their country in its need,
 Nor let a thought of self or aught impede
 Their service—

Praise indeed!

And yet, in all who set Thee first, above
 All other—country, self, and life, and love,

Still higher Praise!

For these kin Thy fidelities.

—In all who serve the sick, the maimed, the
 poor,

In lowly ways—the Openers of the Door
 To sweeter life for any of their kind—

High Praise!

For in their work we find
 Likeness to Thee and Thy sweet charity.

In lives devoted to the Outer Night,
Knights of the Cross in their unending
fight,—

In all Torch-Bearers, carrying the Light
To souls benighted,—to the blind new sight,—

High Praise indeed!

Thou only knowest all the crushing load
They bear who live to bring man back to
God;

In all such lives, with pure white fire
ablaze,—

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

—In all the humbler ministries
Of hearth and home, of field and fold and
farm,

Of desk and shop, of mine and factory!

—In all life's daily rounds, on land and sea,
And in the air—be Praise!

For all,

Done unto Thee, are answer to Thy Call,

And all

In equal measure are heroical.

In all true service—Praise!

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

* * * * *

"I Serve!"

"I serve!"

And though I, do no more than keep the
road,
And here and there help one to bear his
load,—

"I serve!"

"I serve!"

As He once served in lowliest estate,
I seek no more than Him to emulate,—

"I serve!"

"I serve!"

And while my best to His concern I
give,
No higher honour mine, the while I live.

"I serve!"

"I serve!"

And when, my little service done, I die,
On hope of greater service I rely.

"I serve!"

VI.

In all fair waters—Praise!

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

In running waters—Praise!

Praise in the babbling brook that laughs
between

Green rushy banks and meadows' golden
sheen!

Praise in the stream's onrushing, blithe and
free!

—In mighty rivers sweeping to the sea!

Praise in the great fall's diapason roar!

Praise in the incense-mist that hovers o'er!

Praise in the billows thundering on the
shore!

Praise in the spume of their tumultuous
power!

Praise in the little waves laughing in their
glee,

Dancing, glancing, merrily, full of ecstasy!

Praise in the deep still pool fringed round
with fern!

In smiling lake, in lonely mountain tarn!

Praise in the falling rain, in morning mist!

Praise in the dewdrops by Thy love-light
kissed!

In all fair waters—

Praise!

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

* * * * *

*For the River of God flows full and free,
Through the banks of Time to the boundless
sea,
That is Love indwelling Eternity.*

*And the trees that are planted by the River,
They drink of the springs supernal;
In wonderful estate they grow,
Their leaves no withering ever know,
And to their infinite delight
Their fruit is sempiternal.*

VIII.

In all things growing—Praise!

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

—In every grass-blade's tiny tilted spear,
No two alike in all the mighty sphere!

—In every daisy jewelling the mead!—
In every tiniest, humble, wayside weed!—
No lowliest thing that germs, and springs,
and grows,
But at His best the Master-Craftsman shows.

Praise in the springing wheat, green-flushing
earth
With the sweet promise of perennial birth!
Praise in the corn, gold-ripening in the ear,
To glad the world with certainty of cheer!

Praise in the green earth made each day
anew!
Praise in the meadow pearled with morning
dew,—
Each feathered head of grass a mystic grace
All unsurpassed in perfect comeliness!

Praise in the chestnut's myriad tiny spires!
 Praise in the gorse's never-dying fires!
 Praise in the branching elm and spreading
 oak!
 Praise in Queen Birch's graceful swinging
 cloak!

Praise in the poplar's lofty swaying plume!
 Praise in the violet's modest-smiling bloom!
 Praise in the lily's rapture of delight,
 No queen on earth more sumptuously dight!

Praise in the rose's glad exuberance!
 Praise in the sunflower's wild extravagance!

Praise in the heather's bravely-blushing bells,
 Ringing their soundless chimes o'er moors and
 fells!
 Praise in each quickening bud that grows
 and swells,
 And bursts its swaddling-bands at last and
 stands
 One more sweet marvel from the Master's
 hands!

Praise in the aspen's softly-whispering leaves!
 —In the red creeper climbing to the eaves,
 Its tiny fingers clutching tight the wall
 With clasp unconsciously hermetical!

Praise in the swinging cups of all sweet
flowers,
Flinging their incense to the summer show-
ers!

Praise in the great woods' russet, amber,
gold!

Praise in the green shoots pushing through
the mould!

Praise in the Autumn moors that blaze and
burn!

—And in the tight-clasped, curly-wrinkled
fingers

Of the new-born baby fern!

Praise in the wandering smoke of swaling-
fires,

That wreathe the hill-sides where the funeral-
pyres

Of waste make ready for the better things,
Plowings and planting and rich harvestings!

Praise in the glorious riot of the Spring,
When Nature, after her long prisoning,

Flings off her bonds, and gaily bourgeoning,
Calls all the earth to laugh and dance and
sing!

And Praise

In the stark beauty of the naked trees,
Sharp etched in ebon on the winter sky!—
All bare and beautiful,—so consciously

Assertive in their witching comeliness,—
 So unabashed in their sweet nakedness,—
 So chaste in their rare symmetry and grace,
 They fairer seem than in their summer dress!

And still more beauteous when Thy magic
 breath

Vests every twig in soft white furry sheath,
 Sparkling like frosted silver in the sun,
 And gleaming cold as steel beneath the moon.

*These all, in their own sweet peculiar ways,
 Render their Maker sweet spontaneous
 praise,—*

*Praise without ceasing!
 Without ending—Praise!*

* * * * *

*One of the first things God made was a garden,
 And He loved it exceedingly.*

*He planned it with care and made it all fair,
 So that those whom He loved all His pleasure
 might share,*

And wonderful sweet was His garden.

*And He loved to walk in His garden,
 In the cool when the shadows fell,
 When the daylight was gone and there, all
 alone,*

*He could ponder the things that were still to
 be done,*

As He walked in the cool of His garden.

*And the Lord still walks in His garden,
But at times He is sad of heart,
For, in spite of His care, things are not as
they were,
And not as He hoped when He made it so
fair,
Yet He loves to be there in the cool of the
air,
And He does not despair of His garden.*

VIII.

Praise in Thy skies!
In all Thy wondrous atmospheres—
Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!

—In that unfathomable blue, that seems
 Fit dwelling-place for Thine Infinity;

—In those great snow bergs of white-piled
 cloud
 That float serene athwart the azure deeps,
 Majestic argosies that bear within
 Their magic holds rich freights of fantasy—
 Visions and dreams that sweep the soul
 along
 To realms where Life is ever young and
 strong,
 And Time a bright Spring day

—In those stupendous crests of virgin snow
 Which dwarf earth's noblest peaks to little
 things,
 Mountains of God, all inaccessible,
 Save to the spirit with its eagle-wings!

Praise in those lucent seas of swimming
gold,—

Of blues and greens so rarely soft and sweet,
Earth cannot match their hues attenuate;

Where purple, gold-rimmed island float, and
set

The soul aglow with longings to be free;

Where golden seas brim on a golden shore,

And creep, and creep, and win it more and
more;

And little creeks appear and disappear,

And great lagoons swim softly in the light,

Till the soul swells with rapture of delight,

And longs to loose its moorings and away

In glorious flight to the eternal day!

Praise in the soft-winged clouds that greet
the dawn

With matin-chants none but the angels hear,

And wave their farewells to the setting sun,

While earth in silence strains to catch the
tune

Of their sweet evensong!

Praise in the boiling fury of the storm,

Black-robed, and lightning-shot, and thrud
with lace

Of streaming rains that flush the foul earth
clean,

While crashing thunders clear the sullen
skies!

Praise in the pale gray glamour of the mist,
 Diaphanous, inscrutable, wet-kissed,
 Which rings one round with all the mysteries
 Of vast invisible infinities
 And all the unknown possibilities!

*In all the glories that Thy sky displays—
 In all Thy wondrous atmospheres, be Praise!
 Praise without ceasing!
 Without ending—Praise!*

* * * * *

*Free . . . free . . . free would I be
 To soar to the wonders of wonders I see
 In the heights of Thy radiant tranquillity,—
 Free from the ties and the trammels of
 things,
 Free to companion my soul when it sings,
 As it wings its glad way to the portal of day
 And the end and beginning of journeyings.*

*Free from the bonds of the years of captivity,
 Ablaze with the joy of this new-born ac-
 tivity,
 Jubilant strong in its latest nativity,
 High . . . high . . . high would I fly,
 Through the heights and the depths of the
 blue summer sky
 To the transcendant joys of infinity!*

*I would swim in those oceans of shimmering
 gold,
 I would bask on the beaches their soft arms
 enfold,
 I would wander at will on the purple-gold
 isles,
 I would climb through the caves of the wild-
 tumbled piles,
 I would dream on the shores of the chang-
 ing lagoons
 Where time is unknown and where nought
 importunes,
 I would rest on the breast of yon high snowy
 crest,
 When the wonders of Paradise flame in the
 west,
 And the earth and the heavens with their
 glories invest.*

*I would fly to the Light . . . to the Light
 . . . to the Light,
 And for ever be free from the scathe of the
 night,—
 Lord, gift me with wings when my time
 comes to go,
 And straight will I come as a shaft from the
 bow.*

IX.

In all bird voices—Praise!

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

Praise in the song of every sweet-voiced
bird,
Nor truer praise has God or man e'er heard;
As all spontaneously it breaks and swells,
The singer's thanks it all unconscious tells.

—In every flute-throat perched on top-most
bough,
Singing his matins or his evensong!
—In every anxious follower of the plough,
Seeking a meal the new-tuned clods among!

Praise in the swelling raptures of the lark,
Thrilling the heavens with carols past all
art,
Each ringing note a white-hot silver spark
Struck from the passion of a bursting heart!

Praise in the sanguine robin as he comes,
In faith and works robust and boundless
trust,
Across the snows to claim his dole of
crumbs!

Praise in the swallow's whistle, clear and
shrill,
As, like a shuttle of blue burnished steel,
Hither and thither in the waning light,
He darts, and dives, and weaves his mazy
flight!

Praise in the speckled thrush whose tuneful
note,
Through constant repetition learned by rote,
Pours in a flood from swelling heart and
throat!

Praise in the blackbird's long melodious
tale,
When, with the endless wonders of his
scale,
His roosting neighbours he doth still regale
With songs of love that time can never stale!

Praise in the starling's chatter, blithe and
gay,
As, in the quest his hunger to allay,
He thrusts himself with zeal into the fray,
Nor suffers ought his ardour to dismay!

Praise in the sweet low warbles of the night,
Whose mystic rite is love's supreme delight!

Praise in the sweet-sweet-sweet small twittering voice
Of the humbler folk whose hearts rejoice;
Whose wooings, matings, buildings for the brood,
Tell their full thanks for Thy good fatherhood!

These all, in their own sweet spontaneous ways,
Render their thanks in never-ending praise.

Even the cuckoo, child of Ishmael,
With but two notes and no place where to dwell,
Still does his best his grateful thanks to tell.

And the lone owl, within the dim dark wood,
Peals out his gratitude for nightly food.

The eagle screams fierce thanks above her nest
Of eaglets cradled on the mountain's crest.

The solemn crow, with hoarse discordant
 voice,
 Tells to the world his own peculiar joys.

Harsh voices these, but He Who gave them
 knows
 That each its owner's gratitude displays
 As truly as the others' sweeter lays,
 And through the harshness He discerns the
 praise;
 And so—in all bird-voices—Praise!

Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!

* * * * *

*The wonderful trust of a birdling!—
 So full and so free!
 For what does it know?—Not the small-
 est thing
 Save its own concerns, and those it learns
 'Neath the mother-ring and instinctively.
 And yet it is happy as happy can be,
 Enjoying each moment right merrily.
 It knows not at all what to-morrow may
 bring,
 And yet it can cheerfully chatter and
 sing;
 To-day is enough; yesterday has no
 sting;*

*It carries no load, for it simply trusts
God*

*For its home, and its food, and for
everything.*

X.

*In Nature's endless wonders—Praise!
Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

In all high mountains—Praise!
Praise when they glimmer golden in the dawn!
Praise when the setting sun, dropped out of
sight,
Still holds them from the oncome of the
night
With tender fingers dipped in rose love-
light!
And praise when, in the moonlight clear and
bright,
They tower aloft, serene, and calm, and
white.

Praise in the valleys, nestling snug and
sweet,
Amid the folds of the tumbled robes
About the mauntain's feet!

Praise in the wide wild riot of the moor,
Untamed, untamable, rejoicing, free,
Unruffled, jubilant in sun and shower,
All stern, all sweet, compact of mystery.

Praise in the bold tors heaving through the
 mist,
 Mystic, defiant, robed in amethyst!
 Praise in the smiling combs that run be-
 tween,
 Boscage and tillage and a glad terrene!

Praise in the forest's lofty pillared aisles,
 Dim-lit, soft-carpeted, and silent save
 For Nature's own sweet voices, all attuned
 To worship in such noble sanctuary!
 —And in far lowlands glimpsing through the
 trees,
 Wreathed in dove-mists and tempting secre-
 cies!

Praise in vast sweeps of prairie and of
 veldt,
 Where Space Majestic in his might is felt,
 Felt to the crushing of man's soul, unless
 Himself within himself can fruit the wilder-
 ness!

Praise in dim deserts fading to the line
 Where earth and sky in wanton dance com-
 bine!
 Praise where the springs of fertile oases
 Relieve and bless their vast austerities!

Praise in the eternal wastes of ice and snow,

Where in the dimness life runs thin and
low!

—In those wild splendours of the Northern
skies

Which fill their nights with mystic phan-
tasies!

In the exuberance of tropic lands,
Where Nature gives herself with open hands,
Be Praise!

Such prodigal profusion she displays,
Man can but gaze in wonder and amaze.

Praise in the weeds and flowers and grass
that weave

Robes of forgiveness where the battles
were,

Bidding man rise above his soul's despair,
Since God and Nature every loss repair!

Praise in the humble coltsfoot,
Striving, might and main,
To clothe earth's winter nakedness,
And hide the rough scars made by man,
With fair bright robes again!

—In tiny lichens, covering the bare
Scarred rocks with coat of living arabesque

Time's ravage to repair!

There, all unseen, they weave with patient
care

Their broideries of green and black and gray,
And rare old cloth of gold beyond compare.

—In sweet rain-voices after droughty days,—
In thirsty earth's deep joy of drinking—
Praise!

—In rushing storms that purge all Nature
clean,

In sunny days wherein she smiles again!

—In the glad promise of the seven-fold bow,
That heartens man to-day, as long ago!

—In all the faéry magic of the frost,
Be Praise!

—The work below-ground on the stubborn
clods,

The work above which such rare skill dis-
plays,—

The traceries, enamelings, designs,

Unique and unsurpassable, and all

In perfect silence to perfection wrought.

Praise in the pure white mantle of the snow!
—In the weird elfin gleams in glacier caves,
Spectral and soft as those phantasmic
tints
That flit within the curl of breaking waves!

In that lone star, and that cold lonely moon,
Be Praise!

—Steel-bright in a steely sky, they two
alone,
When the blood-red sun, his short course
run,
Sinks into the dun, dull-glowing West,
Where the high-piled bank of smouldering
mist
Lays a rampart of amber-rimmed amethyst
On the winter's afternoon.

Praise in the great waves roaring to the
moon,
Wild dance of splendour to a noble tune!
Praise in the little waves laughing at the
sun,
All alee, merrily, dancing in their fun!

Praise in the sun's great flashing shields of
light
Upon slow-heaving seas! And Praise

In that long shimmering pathway of delight,
 When the white moon rides high the windy
 sky,
 Queen Regnant of the night!

*Nature's ten thousand thousand voices raise
 To her Creator jubilation of praise,—
 Praise without ceasing!
 Without ending—Praise!*

* * * * *

*Thank God for opened eyes,
 And hearts not too o'erwhelmed
 With worldly snares and earthly cares
 For His immanencies!*

*To find Him everywhere,
 In every smallest thing,
 Is His good gift man's soul to lift
 Above its earthly fare.*

*To trace His delicate
 Fine craftsmanship in all,
 Gives sense of new-born reverence
 For all things small and great.*

*In all things Him we find,
 If we but bring to all,
 With conscious will and loving zeal,
 An open heart and mind.*

XII.

In all Thy hidden workings—Praise!

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

—In that great wonder of recurring birth
 In every seed that, in dear Mother Earth,
 Rough-nursed in darkness by the uncomely
 clods,

And fed by rains and snows, stirs in its
 sleep,

And, quickening into life, shakes off its bonds,
 Strives up and down, and so climbs through
 at last

Into the light, and lives, and fruits, and
 bears,

And drops the seeds again of further life!

In that great wonder of recurring birth,—

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

And so with man,—so with all life on earth;
 Life never dies, but ever with new birth
 Speeds on and on the great triumphant
 round,

Transmitting oft, but never dying out.
In that great glory of undying life,—

Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!

In those vast slow-surrendering mysteries
Of force ominific, everywhere at work
In silent might fulfilling Thy behests,
Waiting but man's discovery to be
His willing servants in captivity,

Be Praise!

From one small acorn mightiest oak may
grow,
And from that oak a million oaks may grow.
So in one man a world may be renewed,
As in one man came Life's supremest good.
To Him and Thee be everlasting praise!

Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!

Praise in those mighty hidden workshops,
where,
Unseen, in silence, with most loving care,
The wonders of Thy grace Thou dost pre-
pare,—
Storing the earth, the seas, the ambient air,
With treasure infinite for man's delight;

Ruling the winds and waves, ranging the
spheres

Charging with life the changing atmospheres;
Limning with joy the sunsets and the dawns,
Tinting the grass, the flowers, the wayside
weeds,

Filling to fullest full man's amplest needs
And more,—For Thy exhaustless store above,
By Wisdom charged, is ministered by Love.

*In all Thy hidden, wonder-working ways,
Which fill our hearts with gratefullest
amaze,—*

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

* * * * *

*In silence and in quietness
God's mighty works are wrought
Unheard, unseen, His workmanship
Is to perfection brought.*

*Deep in the earth, and high above,
His unknown powers display
Their multiform activities,
And all creation sway.*

*Ever at work, unheard, unseen,
He is, in everything,
Cause and effect at once in all
That is or e'er has been.*

*Help us, O Lord, in quietness
To do our work, like Thee,
And our souls brace with Thy sweet grace
Of high tranquillity!*

XIII.

In all Thy creatures—Praise!

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

And special praise

In all the common things of field and farm,
Unconscious praise of quite peculiar charm!

—In the sweet-scented breath of browsing
kine,

Blowing like incense on the dewy morn!

—In the blithe barking dogs, whose faithful
eyes

Anticipate their master's urgencies!

—In the old shepherd's patriarchal look,

As to the heights he turns his wayward flock!

—In the great horses' pride of conscious
strength,—

The straining muscles tense beneath the skin,

The arching neck, the dumbly-speaking eyes,
The great fringed hoofs that scrape upon the
stone,
Restless for work, impatient to be gone;
Or, in the furrow plod so cunningly
As the rich earth curls deftly from the plow!

Praise when at last the welcome gloaming
falls,
And home they jog with rhythmic-jingling
chains,
Like little bells that ring at eventide,—
Home to the stable's well-earned warmth and
cheer,
To the full rest that knows not care or fear!
Praise in their wholesome lassitudes that tell
Of one more day's work truly done and well!

Praise in the frisking lambs beside their
dams!
Praise in the calves' shy gambols in the
straw!
Praise in the murmurous hum of homing
bees,
All tireless in their sweet activities!
Praise in the clank of milk-pails in the byre!
Praise in the milk, white-foaming in the pails!
Praise in the deft and hardly conscious skill
Of man and maid unconsciously displayed!

Praise in the waving fields of golden corn!
Praise in the pregnant, well-thatched rounded
stack!

Praise in the merry clatter of the flail!
Praise in the shrill hone on the well-worn
scythe!

These all their praises tell in accents blithe.

Praise in the lesser folk who all rejoice,
Unwittingly, with strange discordant voice,—
Hens, ducks, and geese, domestically bent,
And telling it with joy vociferent.

Praise in the sleepy croaking of the rooks,
In solemn conclave settling for the night!
Praise in the gleaming lights in cottage homes,
That tell of rest and cheer when evening
comes!

*In all Thy creatures, great and small, be
Praise!*

*Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!*

*Let every living thing praise God,
That He hath found it worth
A place in His creation's whole
An entry on the noble scoll
Of His completed earth!*

*And since nought is that liveth not,
Let everything proclaim
Its jubilance in service true,
And day by day its troth renew,
And glorify His name!*

XIIII.

Praise in all Times and Seasons!

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

Praise in Spring's joyous breaking of the
bonds

That Winter knit about her all too long!

Praise in her birthing, bright and naked-free,

Ablaze with new-born ecstasy,

And bursting with glad song!

Praise in her youthful beauty, all arrayed

In bridal splendours though she be but maid!

—In all the thrilling rapture of her lays,

—In all her days,—in all her blithe glad ways,

Be Praise!

And Praise

In Summer's golden days and jocund ways!

—In all her matronly provisioning

For every want—and more! When her full
store

Of fruit and flower she hastens to outpour

Upon us with a great glad joyous laugh,

And bids us her full bowls of nectar quaff.

Foregather, and the best, though oft unseen,
 Is still most there, as it so oft has been,—
 Friends of the past, book-friends, all joyous
 souls

Who lift Life up above its earthly goals.
 In Winter nights, and dazzling Winter days,—
 In all Thy times and all Thy seasons—
 Praise!

*Praise without ceasing!
 Without ending—Praise!*

* * * * *

*Let all men everywhere praise God
 For His most fair creation;
 And praise still more the Open Door
 That offers man salvation!*

*Let all men everywhere praise God
 For His Son's sacrificing!
 That through His Own He hath made
 known
 His mercy all sufficing.*

*Praise God all creatures everywhere
 For mercies so unbounded!—
 No thing there is but ever is
 By His great love surrounded.*

XIV.

In life, and all things living—Praise!
In death, and all that dies not—Praise!
Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!

In that sweet soul of Life which came from
 Thee,
 And goes again to Thee, and lives with Thee,
 Through all the æones of eternity,
Be Praise!

In life that lives in all that Thou hast made,
 Deep hid at times in things inanimate,
 Yet in each single thing Thou didst create,
 Is life, which follows Thy wise ordering;
 Nought is too small, nor aught too great to be
 The casket of Thy rich immanency.
In all things living—Praise!
Praise without ceasing!
Without ending—Praise!

And in Great Death be Praise!

Death, the Bead-Roller of all noble souls,
Whose lives pressed ever up towards noblest
goals!

Death, who, with loving hands, at last unties
The swaddling-bands of Life's activities.

—Death, who flings wide the Golden Gates of
Life,

And brings to man God's Peace, and rest
from strife!

—Death who leads Life to larger life above,
And crowns it with the miracles of Love;

—Death who reveals the long-locked secret
things,

And gifts the soul with grace of tireless
wings!

Death, the Divided,—The Untirer, Death!

Death, the Destroyer,—The Restorer, Death!

Death, the Dethroner,—The Crown-Bearer,
Death!

Death, the Deposer,—The King-Maker, Death!

Death, the Dark-Veiler,—The Revealer,
Death!

Death, the Defiler,—The Purifier, Death!

Death, the Downcaster,—The Uplifter, Death!

Death, the Despoiler,—The Enlarger, Death!
 Death, the Discomfitor,—The Deliverer,
 Death!

Death, the Disabler,—The Renewer, Death!
 Death, the Desolator,—The Consoler, Death!
 Death, the Grim Gaoler,—The Releaser,
 Death!

Death, the Devourer,—The Life-Giver, Death!

Death, the Shroud-Bearer,—Death with The
 Key!

Death, the Peacemaker, the Ender of Strife!
 Death, not the Master, the Servant of Life!
 Death, the Arch-Enemy?—Nay, Death The
 Friend!

Death the Beginning of Life—not the End!

In Death, and all that dies not—Praise!

Praise without ceasing!

Without ending—Praise!

Life! . . . Death! . . .

What then?

Save only in the name

They are the same.

For death begins with life's first breath,

And Life begins at touch of death.

The child's first feeble cry

Death's claim doth ratify.

Life's last long restful sigh

But tells the new life nigh.

So, fear not either one or other

Each is to each but great twin-brother.

Where'er thou goest, there go they,

Close comrades with thee all the way.

And since 'tis better far to go

With two good friends than one dread foe,

Lay a hand gently in the hand of each,

*And thou shalt learn the best that each can
teach.*



Let all men everywhere praise God
For all that He hath done,
But most of all for Love's High Call
Through Jesus Christ, His Son!
To him all praise and glory be
While Time its course doth run!
To Him the Kingdom and the Power,
When Time and Everness once more
For evermore are one!

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